

VZCZCXRO4704  
PP RUEHAG RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLZ RUEHROV  
DE RUEHVI #3622 3611518  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
P 271518Z DEC 06  
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5863  
INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE  
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC

UNCLAS VIENNA 003622

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STATE FOR EB/IFD/ODF - WAECHTER AND EUR/AGS - SAINT-ANDRE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EFIN](#) [ECON](#) [PPOL](#) [AU](#)

SUBJECT: DEMARCHE TO AUSTRIA: 2007 LIBERIA PARTNERS FORUM

REF: STATE 201818

¶1. A/DCM presented reftel demarche on December 27 to Carolina Gudenus, the Austrian MFA's DAS-level Africa Director. We stressed the need for high-level engagement in the February 2007 Liberia Partners' Forum, pointing out that Secretary Rice, Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and

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World Bank President Paul Wolfowitz would open the meeting. We reviewed President Sirleaf's accomplishments to date, and focussed on the Liberia's continuing need for financial assistance.

¶2. Gudenus said the situation in Liberia was a matter of interest to Austria. However, she said Liberia was not among the "priority countries" to which Austria devotes the bulk of its international assistance. (Note: Austria seeks to maximize the impact of its assistance by channeling funds to long-term programs in a small number of recipient countries. End note.) It was likely that Austria would cover the February meeting through its Embassy in Washington, she said. Phillips